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Attorney assails ex-analyst's data used in broadcast

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A NEW YORK — An attorney for Gen. William C. Westmoreland hammered away yesterday at the memory and methods of the general's longtime accuser, Samuel A. Adams, attempting to discredit the former CIA analyst's version of events in Vietnam.

Adams, whose accusations against Westmoreland formed the basis of a disputed 1982 CBS documentary, underwent a detailed, daylong cross-examination during which attorney David M. Dorsen elicited several inconsistencies as he pressed Adams on specifics of events in 1967 and 1968.

Dorsen, his voice rising slightly, accused Adams at one point of basing his 19-year campaign against Westmoreland's command on a captured enemy document — "an old piece of paper" — that Dorsen said Adams took as "gospel" without fully verifying its accuracy.

Throughout the day, Dorsen sought to prove to the jury that Adams' research was one-sided and incomplete, that he had given different versions of his charges to different people at different times, and that he was hazy about details.

Adams, 51, a Vietnam analyst for the CIA from 1966 to 1968, clung to his accusations that Westmoreland presided over a conspiracy to alter and suppress reports of a much larger enemy force than his command was officially reporting. That was the essence of the CBS documentary *The Uncounted Enemy: A Vietnam Deception*.

The cross-examination of Adams will continue today in the trial of Westmoreland's \$120 million libel suit against CBS.

Dorsen's questions about the Viet Cong documents — the basis for many of Adams' assertions that Westmoreland's command deliberately minimized enemy strength — marked the first time in the 14-week-

old trial that Westmoreland's side had raised in detail the possibility that the documents were bogus. Previously, the documents had not been the focus of testimony. Adams conceded to Dorsen that translation of the documents and their "varied and ambiguous" terminology made interpreting them difficult.

Dorsen then referred to a captured Viet Cong document that Adams had called "the best document we ever had on the guerrilla strength" of the enemy.

"All you had, Mr. Adams, isn't it

the case, is a piece of paper, an old piece of paper, prepared by the Viet Cong, that you were taking as gospel?"

"Sir," Adams responded, "these old pieces of paper prepared by the Viet Cong were what the United States at that time primarily relied upon to find out about the VC."

Dorsen then suggested that the Viet Cong guerrillas inflated estimates of their strength in order to dupe their headquarters into sending them a bigger payroll.

"Viet Cong guerrillas do not get paid," Adams shot back.

When Dorsen asked whether the guerrillas would nonetheless get more rice if they inflated their strength, Adams replied dryly, "No, sir. They ate locally."

Dorsen also tried to prove that Westmoreland's command was reporting substantially the same high estimates of enemy strength as the CIA had proposed to intelligence conferences preparing a special 1967 report on enemy strength for President Lyndon B. Johnson. The broadcast accused the command of conspiring to deceive Johnson and the Joint Chiefs of Staff about the true strength of the enemy.

Adams, however, refused to concede Dorsen's point.

Dorsen had Adams read from a top-secret 1967 CIA memo, which concluded that higher estimates proposed by Adams and others in the CIA did not "reflect an actual growth of communist forces during the past year — on the contrary, they may have declined slightly — but a refinement of information."

Asked whether the document indicated that enemy forces may have actually declined — rather than increased, as Adams has said — Adams replied, "I think you can get that interpretation."

Dorsen also introduced a 1967 memo in which Adams described the enemy's "militia" in South Vietnam as "largely noncombatant." The broadcast accused Westmoreland of ordering the militia dropped from official reports as a "tactic" to artificially lower enemy strength estimates, but Westmoreland has testified that the militia was dropped because it posed no military threat.

Adams explained to Dorsen: "I was talking about the fact that militia largely did not mix in the fire fights ... They laid mines and booby traps. ... They were doing actions which harmed American troops."